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In Memoriam.

A Poem.

by

The Author of "England and Australia," "The Lost Child," "English Country Sabbath," &c., &c.

London:
Saunders, Otley, and Co., Conduit Street.
1861.

280. c. 15.

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In Memoriam.

BLESSED Redeemer of our race,
  Both perfect God and man we know,
Dwelling in all ethereal space—
  For we are told that it is so.

Invisible, Immortal Being!
  'T is true that we no longer see
Thee face to face, as thou wert seen,
  Or hear Thy voice, as those with Thee:

But yet we mark Thy winter's rain,
  We know it is not sent to harm;
And joy in Thy autumnal grain,
  We watch Thee in Thy thunder-storm:

We know earth is not Thy sole dower,
  And though Thy once heard voice is mute,
We view Thee in the first spring flower—
  Thy voice still speaks to us in fruit.

Thou wishest every morn good morrow,
  In joy and gladness, in its mirth,
As Thou art with each in its sorrow,
  For Thou art over all Thy earth:

There dwell'st Thou in the midst, at prayer;
  Thou answerest when we ask in faith,
We feel it as we enter where
  Thou art, for so the Scripture saith.

Strong in Thy wrath, and terrible,
  For in Thy lightnings we view
(Which speak from earth to us of hell)
  Thy power, and yet Thy goodness too.

The Father in Thee we adore,
  Who sent Thee from His Throne above
To see Thine own, and ope the door
  From fount of His eternal love.

And now, O Lord, as in our youth
  We loved to hear and read Thy Word,
So faith and hope, found in Thy truth,
  Let nothing ever more disturb.

And when it please Thee to remove
  This mortal into that to be,
Then welcome with Thy beam of love—
  Swallow up Death in Victory!

In Memoriam.

M. W. H.

Obit 1854.

Dearly are all our pleasures bought,
  For now and then a tear will rise,
But then we cannot chain down thought—
  We brush it off, it is not wise.

We take a book, it has no charm
  To soothe the spirit into rest,
We put it by, it cannot warm
  The heart that is no longer blest.

And what are tears that oft drop whole,
  Those pearly treasures of the heart?
They are the dew-drops of the soul
  That from the inner spirit part.

Offspring of sad or sunny days,
  Elf fairies withdrawn from their cells,
That shunning warmer, brighter rays
  Live where the loneliest spirit dwells :

Like earthly dew-drops had they waited
  To be absorbed in bright sunlight,
Unlike those drops so often fated
  Rudely be brushed off in a night :

Like to the gentle April shower
  When it soft rain falls light and small,
The drops rest on a tender flower
  A rude brush shakes it and they fall :

But though shook off they are not lost,
  They dew the surface of the ground ;
So when the soul 's with trouble tost,
  In tears its best relief is found.

Hard is their fate who cannot weep
  The ills of life in part away,
Whose inward feeling is so deep
  It cannot break and grief must stay :

Hard is their fate when not a tear
  Will ease the brain or soothe the heart,
But sit like faithful terrier where
  The grave is dug, and not depart ;

Hard is their fate that treasure grief,
  Who woo it as a pleasant thing,
And look to tears for their relief,
  And find them quite a solace bring.

Not few in sorrow thus depart—
  Pine like the dove when lost its mate,
Weaker and weaker throbs the heart,
  Till frame becomes inanimate.

So let them enter to their rest—
  So let them ease their earthly care—
Surely those spirits will be blest,
  And those they loved shall meet them there.

It is not often men thus pine,
  But woman in a love more deep,
More pure, less earthly than divine,
  Loves till her bosom breaks to sleep.

I would not counsel one to part
  At once with sorrow; let it stay
To wind its tendrils round the heart
  Till deepest grief has pass'd away—

Till kindly spirits win a smile,
  And music lend its charm anew,
And calmer weeks and months beguile
  The heart to happiness in view.

Then look out for some loving heart,
  Some kindred spirit that will ease
The weight of care, and can impart
  Its fondness in a wish to please :

That 's not too young nor yet too old,
  Is neither low nor yet too high—
For pride 's apt to embody cold
  As mountains snow that woo the sky :

Seek such, and you will surely find
  Its blessing in a happy wight
That can fall back upon a mind
  Of genial soil, and erudite :

A quiet, loving spirit, free
  From the rude turbulence of strife—
Fit subject for a nunnery,
  But fitter still for stirring life :

Fitted for its maternal cares,
  Its social converse, and its mirth;
Fitted for that which life endears,
  All that to happiness gives birth:

And fear not looking out too soon
  Where all is tested and approved,
For sweet is a new honey-moon
  Though dear where social fondness moved.

Bury the loss of one kind heart
  In fond selection of another,
And though it be found hard to part,
  'T will sweetly tend the loss to smother.

'T was not the loss of a first love,
  Yet of the first wrought deep affection,
Which ended in the mated dove,
  A lasting, fond, and sweet connection.

Let none despise a wedded life,
  For many live and love together
With scarce a particle of strife,
  With scarce a cloud of stormy weather:

As smooth waves in the tropics vie
  To roll their murmur on the ear,
So loving hearts and friendships nigh,
  And children in their prattle dear

Roll away time with gentle hand,
  Or stay it in a round of mirth,
Where manners innocent or bland
  Give to the kindlier feelings birth.

So roll our passing years away
  With music, books, with songs and prayer,
Forgetting not in things more gay
  The heavenly ones that should endear.

Her eyes reflected from the soul,
  They spoke as with the lips of breath,
They lit with radiance the whole,
  Most sweetly pensive closed in death.

Seldom a murmur passed her lips
  Though toil and trouble mark'd her days,
And ever sat the beam which dips
  Th' horizon in the sun's last rays :

And as she calmly slept in death
  She look'd more beautiful than ever,
I hardly had restored her breath
  To ease the pang, the thought we sever.

It was not then I deeply felt,
  I knew the Lord had early sought her,
I gave one kiss, and I had knelt,
  And not the world before had bought her.

Oh, no! it was not then I wept,
  She look'd too saintly to molest her,
She was as if an angel slept,
  I was but glad I had possess'd her.

But she had gone and I was left,
  And those she bare, and nurs'd, and cherish'd,
All young and fair, of her bereft,
  'T was then I would she had not perish'd:

'T was when soft music met the ear,
  As evening closed, when all was still
The eye would moisten with a tear,
  The spirit move against the will:

'T was then I wished her back again,
  A selfish wish that well might shame,
But let those of my fellow men
  Who 've met the loss be first to blame.

She was too good for this frail earth,
  A grain of wheat amongst the tares,
It smiled but little on her birth,
  And heaven released her of its cares :

Whom the gods love die young, we're told,
  And they who live on, test its truth ;
So blossoms as they each unfold
  Are found the fairest in their youth.

Would we were as a fair fruit tree
  That we might blossom till we die,
Whose boughs are hanging heavily,
  Whose first ripe fruit is asking why

It may not blossom thus and bear
  For ever in its gay sunshine ;
The answer will not strange appear,
  It then would be a tree divine.

But man has only one spring time,
  One summer, autumn, winter drear,
The bell will toll as well as chime,
  Its last toll falls not on the ear.

And as the blossoms when they fall
  Leave embryo fruit to take their place,
So man, when God is pleased to call,
  Leaves the young blossoms of his race.

Many are taken at an age
  When 't is found hard with them to part—
When youthful prattle doth engage
  And bind love closer to the heart.

And those who linger longer here,
  And end the winter of their days,
Nor early part from those most dear,
  But cling to all that can engage,

Are but as trees the woodman spared,
  That cut down would have harm'd the rest,
Or as where social rooks have paired
  And built the fond parental nest.

For some few years from sire to son,
  Mother to daughter, live our race,
Till time and sickness shall have won,
  And one or both the name displace.

How much we value all below—
  How little prize the realms above—
It is no wonder, One we know
  And knowing cannot cease to love:

The other is but dimly seen—
  By many never seen at all—
The love, the pleasures, hopes, which lean
  On earthly things are seldom small.

Only in sickness, trouble, grief,
  We lose the fond drawn dreams of life,
Then oft the struggle is not brief
  Which shall prevail to end the strife.

We lose an object dearly priz'd,
  We turn to Him who gave the blow,
And let the stricken be advis'd
  For it is wisdom to do so;

When deep grief 's lessen'd, stay'd, remov'd,
  For God removes it who is kind,
Then seek again to be belov'd,
  Stay on a cultivated mind.

Rest on a gentle, loving heart,
  Win it by simple, earnest lays,
'T is seldom woman will not part
  With freedom for her meed of praise;

And change not when the prize is won,
  Evil to him who slights her then—
Who leaves her lonely and undone—
  Who coax'd, and prais'd, and flatter'd when

Strong in the confidence of worth
  She had not brook'd a frown, a slight,
With polish'd mind and gentle birth
  She finds her day-spring turn'd to night :

Evil to him who moves her tears,
  And mocks her sigh of deep regret,
Who blights the summer of her years
  In grief that they had ever met :

A day of wrath shall meet that man,
  And be he high or be he low,
The evil of it He shall scan
  Who looks o'er all, and let him know.

I would not sit in that man's place
  For all the gold each digger finds,
To be the curse of his own race,
  To tune his heart strings to the winds.

Oh ! rather would I give up life,
  And if I ever fail'd to please,
Then sit in sorrow, not in strife,
  And turn to books and sports for ease :

Nor do I envy that man's taste
  Where, to choose, wealth has left him free,
Who turns his mansion to a waste—
  A dreary waste—with one green tree ;

And waits to see its green leaves fall,
  Its youth and freshness wither too,
And fails the past times to recall
  When it had inmates tried and true :

I do not envy that man's choice,
  Who leaving friends of early years,
Society—the "still small voice"—
  Can see but one thing that endears.

It is unpleasant thus to write,
  Nor do I wish to be too hard,
I would not youth and beauty slight—
  'T is unbecoming in a bard.

But when is decked in richest plumes
  One used to simple, plain attire,
And led to large and gay saloons
  That in a cottage look'd no higher;

When it may interfere with those
  Of higher claims, and make them sad,
With all respect unto the rose,
  One can't help crying out—too bad!

And should young saplings e'er spring up,
  Surplant the earlier garden scions,
It may prove yet a bitter cup
  To offer to a first alliance.

I've look'd long on this nether world
  But never met one soul content,
Could, when his household flag unfurl'd,
  Say—Here no trouble has been sent.

Have dwelt in countries—many too—
  But never found one wholly blest,
Whose people could, however few,
  Say—Here is peace, and here is rest.

The nearest, perhaps, to us at home
  Is Switzerland, but there we find.
Some part are ever doom'd to roam
  And leave all dear to them behind.

There is no hearth but has been cross'd
  By something bitter, something said;
No clipper bark but has been toss'd
  Till it and danger have been wed.

Twice vessels on Australian shores
  Freighted with mass of human lives
Were lost—one nearly at her doors—
  Parents, children, husbands, wives.

Here let the bard a tribute pay
  To Burns's deem'd "noblest work of God,"
To Samuel Peek, for he can say
  Few better rest beneath the sod:

The bard dealt with him many years,
  His nephew, too, and both agreed
His dealings memory endears,
  And there are others gain'd their meed.

There is no kinder, better class
  Than that called middle, for we find
Though often much wealth they amass,
  'T is seldom it contracts the mind:

I can remember well the time
  They were thought little of and snubb'd,
But now I need not tell in rhyme
  That times are changed, and many dubb'd:

But let this pass; a venal age
  We live in, when most worship gold,
Forgetting the precepts that are sage,
  And which men practised more of old.

And why are troubles sent to many?
  A seeming weight above their share,
To bards more frequently than any,
  Ah! why? the answer won't appear.

I never won a gentle heart,
  I scarcely ever had a friend
But they and I were doom'd to part,
  And cause emotion in the end:

I never got a herd of stock,
  I never bought a flock of sheep,
But there would come an after shock
  That gave me only cause to weep.

I have held broad lands of my own,
  Improved and planted others too,
But all is gone and wealth has flown,
  Nor left a competence in view;

Have made a few fair starts in life,
  That promised in their onset well,
A moment flourished and were rife
  In prospect, but in sequel fell:

Have seen far more of this fair earth
  Than falls unto the lot of many,
Foregone its cares, enjoyed its mirth,
  Was in its pastimes gay as any:

Have planted many an orange pip,
  And gather'd afterwards its fruit,
But lost, when sweet 't was to the lip,
  Another treads upon the root.

But think not this has weigh'd me down—
  Oh! no; it has not conquer'd yet,
Though th' Almighty pleased to frown,
  I have with noble kindness met.

But families are not the same,
  My own have help'd me up the mount,
But there are others I could name
  That have not dipped in the same fount.

The Female I would kindly name
  Who many years were found to vie,
But in the sequel were to blame;
  The others—I would pass them by.

My very own I could not get
  Without the strong arm of the law—
But let it pass—although I've met
  With nothing half so mean, by far.

The ills of life, the ills of life!
  They pass and they are felt no more,
Time wages an unequal strife
  With all we feel or felt before:

The eye that wept, the heart that sigh'd,
  Forgetful of what pass'd but late,
The bosom that oft swelled with pride,
  Resume their wonted quiet state.

Oh ! well 't is so ; or else how sad
  The human heart that deeply feels,
The weak, the violent, run mad,
  But calm Religion gently steals

The force of all life's ills away,
  Bids man resume his wonted powers,
Bids the lone heart again be gay,
  And rob the day, and cheat the hours.

Away, despondency, away !
  Fly from the thoughts of recent ills !
Cheer up—ah ! why should sadness stay,
  Canker the heart affection stills ?

Go ! seek again another prize :
  Yes ! thou shalt meet a fond return,
As fair, as precious in thine eyes,
  To make anew thy bosom burn.

Again shall hand rest sweet in thine,
  Again shall lips be fondly press'd,
Again a passion that 's divine
  Stir in thy brain and fill thy breast:

Once more a voice as sweet to hear
  Shall joy thee with a pleasant greet,
Again its melody shall cheer
  And glad thee in a tone as sweet:

Go! with thy Maker for thy friend
  What ills shall rest, what cross shall grieve?
For He shall bring them to an end,
  His goodness sorrow doth relieve.

Oh! will He be unkind to one?
  Or can He, as a God of Love,
On any lonely and undone,
  Look down in anger from above?

Ah! no; crosses are wisely sent
  To try man in an evil hour,
'T is not unkindness that is meant
  To those who put trust in His power.

To make us sad, to make us gay,
  Firmly to stand and bear the worst,
Is in His hand, and none may say
  What dost Thou? but in Him put trust.

Here let no critic harshly blame
  The writings of a newer poet;
Who deeply feel, may not the same
  Express the feelings that can show it.

The poet flits o'er as he likes
  A recent trouble to repress it,
Or probes yet deeper where it strikes
  The warmer feelings that express it.

Her memory as the milky way
  Seen in a fairer eastern clime,
Shall oft emit a soften'd ray,
  At once both mournful and sublime:

Or, as the sun in western isles,
  Shall memory in sadness wear
His summer evenings pensive smiles,
  With mellow twilight ling'ring there:

And as the native of the wild
  Driven by force of fellow man
From where he gamboll'd as a child,
  And laugh'd, and climb'd, and skipp'd, and ran,

Recalls to mind the grassy vale
  Where streamlet rush'd in eddies cool,
And now can only this bewail,
  That there he dabbl'd in the pool:

So can I but recall the time
  Where often only at my beck,
Composing cantos of my rhyme,
  We walked in arm our quarter deck;

A dry short walk, and therefore termed,
  Join'd to the bark hut of our wild,
Where all the kindlier feelings germed
  With renewed prattle of the child.

And with the spirit of the past,
  So, Mary, fondly I review,
A happiness too great to last—
  The by-gones of our love, and you.

In Memoriam.

Bright, sunny days—sweet, sunny days!
  When youth was fresh and I was gay,
And as the songster tunes his praise,
  And plumes his wing upon the spray,
And hails the fond approach of spring,
So hailed I what the day might bring.

Then night pass'd by in sunny dream,
  And morn approach'd me with a smile,
And eyes in melting love would teem,
  And fingers anxious to beguile
Strike cords to pass the hours away,
And life was all one sunny day!

Sweet, sunny days ! but not for me—
  Go ! shine upon less nettled ground,
I am but as a wintry tree
  Whose summer leaves are shed around,
With young bereft of parent dove
That nestled long with me in love.

Bright, sunny days ! once all mine own,
  And you are gone and I am left,
And like the summer swallow flown
  To seek another sunny cleft,
Oh, may I yet like her return
To know the seasons, and to learn !

Sweet, sunny days—sweet, sunny days !
  That with fond recollections teem,
Oh ! shed at least some parting rays,
  If only in autumnal gleam,
And still keep happiness in view
Although it be not spent with you.

Bright, sunny days! come once again
  If even with a milder light,
And cast your beams o'er all I pen,
  And sweetly on my spirit light,
And cheer it to my dying day,
And then emit one parting ray.

Sweet, sunny days! when I am gone
  Oh, rest with those I leave behind!
Beam all your brightness thereupon;
  And, oh! forget not to be kind,
Father! to one left sad and lone,
But take her even for Thine own!

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